

THE BYSTANDER



Ups and Downs.
Uncle Sam No Bill Collector.
When Affonso Hit the Coast.
Times Are Changing—For the Better.
Where the Glad Hand Pays.

"As the world goes round and round, some go up and some go down," financially. An instance to prove this old adage was illustrated only during the past week when the Logan passed through. There was among the passengers a paymaster, now a major in the Army, who, having completed his tour of foreign service, was returning to the homeland. Traveling as his clerk is a man who formerly employed this army major as his clerk. In the call for paymasters in 1898 this man was given a commission in the Army, and with financial reverses the once substantially placed business man was forced to seek for employment. The old employer now became an employee in the service as paymaster's clerk to his former clerk. Thus: "Some go up and some go down" in the busy scales of this old world.

A moral can hereby be drawn from the career of these two men, who so served each other that a change of position has made no difference in the true friendship and comradeship of each.

The "jawbone" or credit system as accorded by persons, firms or corporations to the ranks of Uncle Sam's men, has received a very decided death blow.

In a recent circular issued by the war department the practice of dealers selling articles of merchandise to enlisted men of the Army on credit is discouraged. Hereafter the department will not take notice of any correspondence relative to the nonpayment of soldiers' store bills. Credit, the entrance into the dark valley of debt, from which it is so hard to extricate oneself, is often entered upon by an inviting article of merchandise to be paid for at some indefinite time. If, on the other hand, "cash" alone could secure the article the would-be purchaser would save himself numerous twinges of a disturbed conscience, and the war department much correspondence and trouble in assisting the persons, firms or corporations in collecting bills.

These credit bills constantly aggravating the susceptible buyer, so the war department asserts, has led good men to desert from the Army when the hopeless feeling of debt, debt, debt seems only his monthly portion.

Accordingly, after the serving of this notice, as per circular number forty-seven, any and all persons, firms or corporations indulging in the seductive practice of soliciting credit from the ranks of the Army of the United States will do so at their own risk.

There is nothing in the report that the Hawaiian Bureau at Atlantic City has cabled for Representative Affonso to be sent on at once to add to the attractions on display. This report arises from the various items in circulation regarding Affonso's hit on the Coast, where the management of the Cliff House offered him a magnificent salary to stay and join the seals, not one of which had far any place like the honorable member from Hilo has on his head. As a matter of fact they are still talking about Affonso in San Francisco. He was, they write me, the liveliest thing that ever happened there since the earthquake.

His first day in town, the Hilo editor caught sight of a nickel-in-the-slot sandwich box, with this sign over it:

PUT A NICKEL IN THE SLOT.

Affonso examined it carefully, then twisted his head around to see where the sun was. It being a foggy morning and the crowd jostling him, he failed to sight the luminous, but he grasped the arm of a passerby and inquired:

"Say, which is mauka?"

"You're bugs," answered the one stopped, shaking off the detaining hand. But Affonso didn't get into the legislature by taking any rebuffs. He made another grab and asked:

"Well, say, tell me which is south."

"What do take me for a compass?" said the San Franciscan. "What are you trying to get through you?"

"No offense, partner," answered Affonso, "but a man told me I belonged south of the slot and I want to get my bearing."

Times are changing in good old Honolulu and the changes are for the better. Old things and old customs are being crowded to the wall, but in their places appear things and customs of these latter days. The old salt and the sailing ship have practically disappeared, but in their place are steamships, crowding the harbors, coming in on schedule, heralded by wireless, discharging cargoes with a snap and off again. The family phaeton and the hack maintain a struggling foothold or are gone entirely, busy autos chugging over the macadam and picking the spots left smooth by Johnny Wilson, running past or over pedestrians, sliding along sedately during daylight hours and letting her rip when the sun goes down. The principal downtown attraction five years ago, the Salvation Army open-air meetings, are still with us, but the theaters draw the greater crowds and the Sweet-By-and-By cornet player is drowned out by the megaphonic phonographs, playing in chorus on independent airs. Operatic and theatrical troupes, passing to and from the Colonies, once played one-night or perhaps one-afternoon stands. Now stock companies, vaudevillians, circus troupes and other regular members of the perfish come to Honolulu, play on, go to the volcano, see Hilo and sometimes marry and sometimes just stay.

Of a surety we are entitled to become blasé. All of which above is the result of a little conversation I had with Captain Campbell, of the Ships' Chandyery. The captain tells me that his business has changed altogether. Once he traded marlinespikes for blubber; swapped ropes for whalebone; took in dubious, pieces of eight, sovereigns, louis d'ors, Chilean dollars and United States money all in the one day, while his counter was whittled up once a year by the skippers of a hundred ships. Now he sells stuff to the Army and the Navy, ordered on official forms, paid for by vouchers, called for by boys in uniform who couldn't tell the difference between a sou'wester and a harpoon and who, if told to box the compass, would ask for a hammer and some nails.

The old days have gone, but Captain Campbell perks up with the knowledge that while his old patrons sail no more into Arctic seas or square away for the run around the Horn, his cash register rings oftener than his old money drawer used to open and that there is quite as much profit in cement for an army reservoir as there used to be in perussion snipe for the whale guns.

When Alfred Finlay Thayer was shaking hands with everyone in Honolulu, none suspected that he was a frenzied financier. Perhaps he failed to know it himself. At any rate he borrowed money to ship his automobile to Manila and now he is building steamboats, buying plantations, taking running jumps to Hongkong to interview Walter Dillingham—who never was there—ordering sugar cane points by the million, building mills, doing a board of immigration stunt for himself and generally being a sort of Pierpont Morgan and Alexander Hume Ford combined. All this within a few months. No wonder the Filipinos won't work. Living in the kind of a country Alfred Finlay appears to have discovered, they don't have to.

THE ADVENTURES OF JOSHER BLUFFEM

DEMOSTHENES UP TO DATE.

Oratory is dead, wails the chronic pessimist dolefully; it is a lost art that finds but a feeble echo of former greatness in the lachrymose droolings of Tearful Willie Coelho of Maui and the perfervid verbal gymnastics of Bernard Kelekolio, the Boy Orator of Hilo. The days of Demosthenes, Cicero, Daniel Webster and all the other great ones of the forum have passed into the Great Forgotten. Oratory is dead, dead as the ghost of Julius Caesar. Auwe! Auwe!

But not so. 'Tis but a base slander upon Our Own Times, a Cassandra-roak from the throat of Him Who Will Not Be Comforted. I, Josher Bluffem, the Great Investigator, have looked into the matter during a few of my spare moments, and I know. I always know, you know. In the words of the toastmaster, we have with us today, gentlemen, we—er have with us today—ah—as I was about to state, we—ah—have with us today—

But pardon me; I am going too fast. Let me work up to it gradually and then, at the psychological moment spring his name upon you as a pleasant surprise, and as proof positive that the pessimistic assertions of the detractors of present-day oratory are false, fa-a-ls-e.

I set out with the avowed intention of discovering a real orator, tracking him to his lair and bearding him in his den. It was a fool-hardy enterprise, requiring courage, resource and desperation, but those qualities are my stock in trade, the foundation of my remarkable success and I did not hesitate.

Of my hair-breadth escapes, blood-curdling adventures and the hair-raising moments when I found myself surrounded by hordes of would-be orators clamoring to be perpetuated in my memoirs I will not tell you for fear my veracity might be doubted. Suffice it to say that I did escape by the expedient adopted by Ulysses. I stopped my ears with wax to the swan songs of the word spillers and not a syren of them all could faze me. And at last I found him, the Incomparable Orator, the modern Demosthenes, and when I saw him I knew that he was discovered.

I entered his room unobserved and unheard, for he was occupied—in fact, he was considerably preoccupied. Clothed in dignity, a few clothes and an air of noble gloom, he was standing before a long mirror making faces at himself, executing what I took to be threatening gestures and uttering contorted remarks that reminded me of a dog choking to death on a fishbone.

"Why don't you spit it out if you don't like it?" I said solicitously.

He turned around quickly and said "Ugguly grump whggfd bxgxpgh?"

"No, thank you, I'm a prohibitionist," I replied. "But I'll take a cigar if you don't mind," and I helped myself to a fat one from the box on the table.

His face became purple in his efforts to say something, but the words wouldn't come. Suddenly he gasped like a dying fish and about a quart of Jim Quinn's best road foundation fell out of his mouth.

"What the—?" I began in amazement, but he interrupted me with dignity.

"Pebbles."

"Pebbles?"

"Pebbles?"

"Pebbles?"

"Pebbles?"

"Pebbles?"

"Sing it," I suggested, "and I'll come in on the chorus. I think I know it now."

"Don't be facetious," he said severely. "I'm serious."

"Will you be kind enough, then, to elucidate. It is evident enough to my experienced eye that those are indeed pebbles, or anyway fragments of rock, but why? Are you a chicken or a rock crusher?"

"Neither, I assure you. I am an orator."

Ah, ha! I suspected as much," I said. "Your noble brow betrays you. But why the pebbles?"

"I am surprised at your ignorance," he replied with apparent astonishment. "Don't you know that Demosthenes learned to be an orator by talking with his mouth full of rocks? All the ancient histories tell us that. But somehow it doesn't seem to work well in my case. I am afraid I have the wrong kind of pebbles."

"I think you have," I agreed. "You talked a while ago as if you had a hot potato in your mouth. Maybe Demosthenes used a few chunks off a Grecian Blarney stone."

"I hadn't thought of that," he said. "Perhaps you're right."

"I'm always right," I said. "I'm Josher Bluffem."

"Lost," he groaned and sank helpless at my feet.

"No, found," I replied. "You are discovered."

"If I am found, I am lost," he insisted, and I let it go at that, not caring to argue the point.

"Excuse me a minute," said the orator; "I was just practicing an effusion that I expect to deliver before the Socialists' club at their hall next Friday night, and if you don't mind I'll go over it once more to be sure that my manner of delivery is up to my usual standard."

Natural politeness prevented my expressing my real feelings, and I submitted with a groan.

Standing again in front of the mirror and striking a pose midway between Mayor Fern trying to squelch Supervisor Aylett and Governor Frear remarking that he really has nothing to say, the orator stroked his classic nose thoughtfully, swelled out his chest like a pouter pigeon, coughed twice in a tragic tone and began:

"Err—ahem—gentlemen, ladies and fellow-citizens—ahem—when in the e-reourse of human events—ah, when, gentlemen, ladies and er-others, it becomes necessary, as one might say, in the course of human events—ah—for us to demand that King Street be repaired; when, I say, we, gentlemen and ladies, are obliged to arise in our might and like Patrick Henry, shake our fists in the faces of—er—the supervisors and say 'give us liberty or give us death,' then, ladies, gentlemen and supervisors, er—as I was about to say—as I was about to say—as I—what the deuce was I about to say, anyway?" he demanded, turning to me indignantly.

"How do I know?" I replied. "Put those rocks back in your mouth and nobody will know what you're saying."

"Young man, this is a serious matter and I will not be trifled with," said the Great Orator severely.

"All right, go as far as you like," I replied.

He resumed his tragic pose, stroked his nose again and looked like Claudius Melville delivering the Governor's message to the legislature.

"Ladies and er-others, gentlemen, as that great man, Daniel Webster, said when he made his famous speech on the battle ground of Vicksburg, this is a government of the sugar barons, for the liquor men and by the Holy

Seven and we will not allow this government to be wiped off the face of the earth. We, who have to earn our pot and fish by the sweat of our noble brows, we—er—I say, we will not permit ourselves to be—er—deprived of our immemorial right to lick our wives according to the dictates—ah—of our fancies. Why should the gentleman who ahem—chastises his er-or somebody else's wife be fined \$30 for doing it? Why, I say, when it costs only a hundred bucks to soak a policeman with a beer bottle. Why? Why? Does not that great philosopher, Bill Shakespeare, say that he who spares the rod spoils the wife? And does not Plato tell us of women that, like the dog and the rag carpet, the harder you beat 'em the better they are?"

The Great Orator paused a moment to shake a wobbly finger at his imaginary audience and resumed:

"Once more, like Edmund Burke, in his great speech when he advocated the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, I rise to remark, 'Who crushed down our noble brows and made us brothers to the er-ox? Why should we work for a living when we can hold down a government job. Why—'"

"Forget it," I said irreverently; "your trolley's off and your fuse has blown out."

The Great Orator collapsed suddenly at a chair but missed it and sprawled on the floor.

"Darn you," he remarked feebly, "you've gone and made me forget my lines."

"You don't need any lines," I said. "All you need is a pound of rocks and a mouthful of words and you can make a speech that sounds like a Honolulu legislator advocating party harmony. Is there anything else you can do except waste the English language?"

"Did you ever hear me play the piano?" he inquired hopefully.

"No," I replied. "I am naturally of a mild and peaceful disposition and keep out of brawls as much as I can."

He arose quickly, stepped over to the piano that stood in a corner of the room, seated himself and got a firm foothold on the loud pedal and then the tornado struck me.

Wagner? Say, Wagner was an amateur alongside of him. A combination of two toments over a clothesline, a horsefiddle and a Berger's hand might give a feeble, but only a feeble, imitation of the unholy din that arose from that tortured piano. The universe shrieked for mercy, the heavens writhed in agony and I swooned. When I came to he was vigorously encoring himself and preparing to do it all over again.

"Don't," I begged of him, "don't. I'd rather hear you make a speech."

"Now, I'll sing," he said.

This being a moral family paper, published on Sunday morning and carried through the mails, I'll not describe his performance. I'd rather describe his execution if Warden Henry ever gets a chance at him.

"Who are you, anyway?" I inquired feebly when the operation was over and I was beginning to come out from under the influence.

"Me? You don't know who I am?" he said in great astonishment.

"Nope, I don't know," I replied. "If I did, I wouldn't be here. Who are you?"

He rose and carefully struck an attitude, glancing in the mirror to see if it suited him.

"I," he said impressively, "I am the Honolulu Demosthenes—please don't confuse me with the culinary genius of Hilo—the well and favorably known lawyer—Jim Coke does the work, you know—a former member of the legislature of the Territory of Hawaii, the handsomest man in Honolulu. I am Eddie Douthitt!"

"I'm going to inform on you," I said, and grabbing my hat, I rushed wildly out of the door and escaped.

Small Talks

EDDIE DOUTHITT—No. I can't afford to run for city attorney. Can you blame me?

GOVERNOR FREAR—I am going into retirement for a while to work on my annual report.

PRINCE KUHIO—Col. Samuel Parker is just our boy Sam, the boy of yesterday and the boy of tomorrow for all Hawaii. We all love him.

B. VON DAMM—Fifteen years ago on Saturday nights you could walk up and down Fort street and meet no one. Now, all Honolulu seems to be on the Rialto.

R. W. BRECKONS—I would recommend that everybody go to the Central Union church today. Doctor White, the man who is to preach, has just come back from the volcano.

MARSTON CAMPBELL—The people are getting to like the meter system so well that we can't buy meters fast enough to supply the demand. It makes a lot of difference in the amount of water used, too.

BERT LIGHTFOOT—I don't believe that these restaurants ought to be given Sunday licenses until they serve decent potatoes. Look at that one. It's the same one I had yesterday. There's my mark on it.

E. B. BLANCHARD—This government chemical job is a new one to me and I've been reading law for a week but I like the work and see a lot of amusement ahead. There's going to be a surprise around town someday.

JOHN M'CROSSON—Our beet sugar experiment on Lanai has shown a very high percentage of sugar in the beets we have already grown. Lanai will be the most highly developed island in all the group when we have all our projects in full swing.

PURSER ALLEN OF THE KOREA—Our travel business from the Orient eastward just now is on the wane, but it will pick up both ways next month. The traveling business men will then be going to the Orient, and just now, anyhow, its fearfully hot in Hongkong.

H. M. AYRES—A beautiful instance of putting things mildly came to my notice the other day. A street car had demolished a carelessly-placed wheel. The owner, a Japanese, gazing ruefully at the wreck, exclaimed to the conductor: "S-s-a-a; too bad—all spoilt."

A. W. SEABURY—Wouldn't the empty lot on the corner of King and South streets make a swell market? One wouldn't have to go through dirty Chinatown to procure his eatables, but to a neat beautiful place centrally located. It would add to beauty pretty Honolulu, and I do hope that some promoter will look the matter up.

DEPUTY SHERIFF ROSE—The Bulletin misinterpreted my statements when it branded as a fake the story of a man beating and almost killing his wife. The Advertiser's story was right inasmuch as a report to that effect was turned in by Captain Baker. The truth concerning the matter was only discovered after further investigation.

The Citizen's Civic Duty

Exchange.

Mayor Gaynor's advice to college graduates in one particular, at least, is advice that every man everywhere who is striving to be a good citizen might take home to himself. The pith of this advice is that in municipal elections we should never support or oppose a candidate because of his attitude toward national political issues. "Stand for high tariff or free trade as you please," said Mr. Gaynor, "but don't let that fact influence you when you are voting for mayor." This admonition may not have the novelty of originality, but it has the merit of being sound. The questions involved in the election of a mayor or any other municipal officer are altogether distinct from those involved in national elections. A man may be a good Republican or a good Democrat who does not take the trouble to inquire into the politics of those who are seeking positions of trust and responsibility in the government of his city or town.

We shall have better municipal government when the people look upon those who would serve them with an eye to their character and capabilities rather than to their political opinions. The citizen does not surrender an iota of his larger political privilege by performing his smaller political duty, and it is more than doubtful whether the man who is negligent of his community can be sincerely and unselfishly regardful of the welfare of his country. Civic loyalty, civic pride, devotion to civic duty, are qualities that need to be developed now more than ever among the people of the United States. If the interests of the home, the neighborhood and the community be conserved and developed as they should be—first of all—the nation will take care of itself.